

## SOUR EXPERIENCES.

REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE  
PREACHES IN CHICAGO.

In Some Lives the Saccharine Seems to Predominate—A Gravel in Almost Every Shoe—The Omnipotent Sympathy of Jesus Christ.

CHICAGO, July 8.—The Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., of Brooklyn, preached in this city this evening. He is here on his way home from a tour of the Chautauquas in Missouri, Kansas and Minnesota. The doctor had an enormous audience. His subject was "Sour Experiences," and his text: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar."—John, xiv, 30. The sermon was as follows:

The brigands of Jerusalem had done their work. It was almost sundown, and Jesus was dying. Persons in crucifixion often lingered on from day to day—crying, begging, cursing; but Christ had been exhausted by years of maltreatment. Battered, poorly fed, flogged—his bent over and tied to a low post, his bare back was inflamed with the scourges intersticed with pieces of lead and bone—and now for whole hours the weight of his body hung on delicate tendons, and, according to custom, a violent stroke under the armpits had been given by the executioner. Dizzy, swooning, nauseated, feverish—a world of agony is compressed in the two words: "I thirst!" O sakes of Judea, let a drop of rain strike on his burning tongue. O world, with rolling rivers, and sparkling lakes, and spraying fountains, give Jesus something to drink. If there be any pity in earth, or heaven, or hell, let it now be demonstrated in behalf of this royal sufferer. The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those people who died in crucifixion—a powerful opiate to deaden the pain; but Christ would not take it. He wanted to die sober, and so he refused the wine. But afterward they got to a cup of vinegar and took a sponge in it, and put it on a stick of hyssop, and then press it against the hot lips of Christ. You say the wine was an anesthetic and intended to relieve or deaden the pain. But the vinegar was an insult. I am disposed to adopt the theory of the old English commentators, who believed that instead of its being an opiate to soothe, it was vinegar to insult. Malaga and Burgundy for grand dukes and duchesses, and costly wines from royal vats for bloated imperials; but stinging acids for a dying Christ. He took the vinegar.

In some lives the saccharine seems to predominate. Life is sunshine on a bank of flowers. A thousand hands to clap approval. In December or in January, looking across their table, they see all their family present. Health rubicund. Skies flamboyant. Days resilient. But in a great many cases there are not so many sugars as acids. The annoyances, and the vexations, and the disappointments of life overpower the successes. There is a gravel in almost every shoe. An Arabian legend says that there was a worm in Solomon's staff, gnawing its strength away, and there is a weak spot in every earthly support that a man leans on. King George of England forgot all the grandeur of his throne because one day, in an interview, Beau Brummell called him by his first name and addressed him as a servant, crying: "George, ring the bell!" Miss Langdon, honored all the world over for her poetic genius, is so worried over the evil reports set afloat regarding her, that she is found dead, with an empty bottle of prussic acid in her hand. Goldsmith said that his life was a wretched being, and that all that want and contempt could bring to it had been brought, and cries out: "What, then, is there formidable in a jail? Correggio's fine painting is hung up for a tavern sign. Hawthorne cannot sell his best paintings except through a raffle. Andrew Delbart makes the great fresco in the church of the Annunciate, at Florence, and gets for pay a sack of corn; and there are annoyances and vexations in high places as well as in low places, showing that in a great many lives the sour is greater than the sweets. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar."

It is absurd to suppose that a man who has always been well can sympathize with those who are sick; or that one who has always been honored can appreciate the sorrow of those who are despised; or that one who has been born to a great fortune can understand the distress and the straits of those who are destitute. The fact that Christ himself took the vinegar makes him able to sympathize today and forever with all those whose cup is filled with sharp acids of this life. He took the vinegar!

In the first place, there is the sourness of betrayal. The treachery of Judas hurt Christ's feelings more than all the friendship of his disciples did him good. You have had many friends; but there was one friend upon whom you put especial stress. You feasted him. You loaned him money. You befriended him in the dark passes of life, when he especially needed a friend. Afterward, he turned upon you, and he took advantage of your former intimacies. He wrote against you. He talked against you. He microscopized your faults. He flung contempt at you when you ought to have received nothing but gratitude. At first, you could not sleep at nights. Then you went about with a sense of having been stung. That difficulty will never be healed, for though mutual friends may arbitrate in the matter until you shall shake hands, the old cordiality will never come back. Now I commend to all such the sympathy of a betrayed Christ. Why, they sold him for less than our twenty dollars! They all forsook him, and fled. They cut him to the quick. He drank that cup of betrayal to the dregs. He took the vinegar.

There is also the sourness of pain. There are some of you who have not seen a well day for many years. By keeping out of draughts, and by carefully studying dietetics, you continue to this time; but O, the headaches, and the sideaches, and the backaches, and the heartaches which have been your accompaniment all the way through! You have struggled under a heavy mortgage of physical disabilities; and instead of the placidity that once characterized you, it is now only with great effort that you keep away from irritability and sharp retort. Difficulties of respiration, of digestion, of locomotion, make up the great obstacle in your life, and you tug and sweat along the pathway, and wonder when the exhaustion end. My friends, the brightest crowns in heaven will not be given to those who, in stirrups, dashed to the cavalry charge, while the general applauded, and the sound of clashing sabers rang through the land; but the brightest crowns in heaven, I believe, will be given to those who trudged on amid chronic ailments which unnerved their strength, yet all the time maintaining their faith in God. It is comparatively easy to fight in a regiment of a thousand men, charging up the parapets to the sound of martial music, but it is not so easy to endure when no one but the nurse and the doctor are the witnesses of the Christian's fortitude. Besides that you never had any pains worse than Christ's. The sharpness that stung through his brain, through his

hands, through his feet, through his heart, were as great as yours, certainly. He was as sick and as weary. Not a nerve, or muscle, or ligament escaped. All the pangs of all the nations of all the ages compressed into one sour cup. He took the vinegar!

There is also the sourness of poverty. Your income does not meet your outgoing, and that always gives an honest man anxiety. There is no sign of destitution about you—pleasant appearance and a cheerful home for you; but God only knows what a time you have had to manage your private finances. Just as the bills run up the wages seem to run down. But you are not the only one who has not been paid for hard work. The great Wilkin sold his celebrated piece, "The Blind Fiddler," for fifty guineas, although afterwards it brought its thousands. The world hangs in admiration over the sketch of Gainsborough, yet that very sketch hung for years in the shop window because there was not any purchaser. Oliver Goldsmith sold his "Vicar of Wakefield" for a few pounds, in order to keep the bailiff out of the door; and the vast majority of men in all occupations and professions are not fully paid for their work. You may say nothing, but life to you is a hard push; and when you sit down with your wife and talk over the expenses, you both rise up discouraged. You abridge here, and you abridge there, and you get things snug for smooth sailings, and lo! suddenly there is a large doctor's bill to pay, or you have lost your pocketbook, or some creditor has failed, and you are thrown abeam end. Well, brother, you are in glorious company. Christ owned not the house in which he stopped, or the colt on which he rode, or the boat in which he sailed. He lived in a borrowed house; he was buried in a borrowed grave. Exposed to all kinds of weather, yet he had only one suit of clothes. He breakfasted in the morning, and no one could possibly tell where he could get anything to eat before night. He would have been pronounced a financial failure. He had to perform a miracle to get money to pay a tax bill. Not a dollar did he own. Privation of domesticity; privation of nutritious food; privation of a comfortable couch on which to sleep; privation of all worldly resources. The kings of the earth had chased chaffers out of which to drink; but Christ had nothing but a plain cup set before him, and it was very sharp and it was very sour. He took the vinegar.

There also is the sourness of bereavement. There were years that passed along before your family circle was invaded by death; but the moment the charmed circle was broken, everything seemed to dissolve. Hardly have you put the black apparel in the wardrobe before you have again to take it out. Great and rapid changes in your family record. You got the house and rejoiced in it, but the charm was gone as soon as the crape hung on the door bell. The one upon whom you most depended was taken away from you. A cold marble slab lies on your heart today. Once, as the children romped through the house, you put your hand over your aching head, and said: "Oh, if I could only have it still." Oh, it is too still now. You lost your patience when the tops, and the strings, and the shells were left amid floor; but oh, you would be willing to have the trinkets scattered all over the floor again, if they were scattered by the same hands. With what a ruthless plowshare bereavement rips up the heart. But Jesus knows all about that. You cannot tell him anything new in regard to bereavement. He had only a few friends, and when he lost one it brought tears to his eyes. Lazarus had often entertained him at his house. Now Lazarus is dead and buried, and Christ breaks down with emotion—the convulsion of grief shuddering through all the ages of bereavement. Christ knows what it is to go through the house missing a familiar inmate. Christ knows what it is to see an unoccupied place at the table. Were there not four of them—Mary and Martha and Christ and Lazarus? Four of them. But where are Lazarus? Lonely and afflicted Christ, his great loving eyes filled with tears, which drop from eye to cheek, and from cheek to beard, and from beard to robe, and from robe to floor. Oh, yes, yes, he knows all about the loneliness and the heartbreak. He took the vinegar!

Then there is the sourness of the death hour. Whatever else we may escape, that acid sponge will be pressed to our lips. I sometimes have a curiosity to know how I will behave when I come to die. Whether I will be calm or excited—whether I will be filled with reminiscence or with anticipation. I cannot say. But come to the point I must and you must. In the six thousand years that have passed only two persons have got into the eternal world without death, and I do not suppose that God is going to send a carriage for us with horses of flame to draw us up the steps of heaven; but I suppose we will have to go like the preceding generations. An officer from the future world will knock at the door of our heart and serve on us the writ of ejection, and we will have to surrender. And we will wake up after these autumnal and wintry and vernal and summery glories have vanished from our vision—we will wake up into a realm which has only one season, and that the season of everlasting love. But you say: "I don't want to live. A great many men tumble through the gates of the future, as it were, and we do not know where they have gone, and we only add gloom and mystery to the passage; but Jesus Christ so mightily stormed the gates of that future world that they have never since been closely shut. Christ knows what it is to leave this world, of the beauty of which he was more appreciative than we ever could be. He knows the exquisiteness of the phosphorescence of the sea; he trod it. He knows the glories of the midnight heavens; for they were the spangled canopy of his wilderness pillow. He knows about the fowls of the air; they whirred their way through his discourse. He knows about the sorrows of leaving this beautiful world. Not a taper was kindled in the darkness. He died physicianless. He died in cold sweat, and dizziness, and hemorrhage and agony that have put him in sympathy with all the dying. He goes through Christendom and he gathers up the stings out of all the death pillows and he puts them under his own neck and head. He gathers on his own tongue the burning thistles of many generations. The sponge is soaked in the sorrows of all those who have died in their beds as well as soaked in the sorrows of all those who perished in icy or fiery martyrdom. While heaven was plying and earth was mocking and hell was deciding, he took the vinegar!

To all those in this audience to whom life has been an acerbity—a dose they could not swallow, a draught that set their teeth on

edge and a rasping—I preach the omnipotent sympathy of Jesus Christ. The star of Herschel, the astronomer, used to help him in his work. He got all the credit; she got none. She used to spend much of her time polishing the telescopes through which he brought the distant worlds nigh, and it is my ambition now, this hour, to clear the lens of your spiritual vision, so that looking through the dark night of your earthly troubles you may behold the glorious constellation of a Savior's mercy and a Saviour's love. O, my friends, do not try to carry all your ill-lones. Do not put your poor shoulder under the Apollonides when the Almighty Christ is ready to lift up all your burdens. When you have a trouble of any kind, you rush this way, and that way; and you wonder what this man will say about it; and what that man will say about it; and you try this prescription, and that prescription, and the other prescription. Oh, why do you not go straight to the heart of Christ, knowing that for our own sinning and suffering race he took the vinegar!

There was a vessel that had been tossed on the sea for a great many weeks, and been disabled, and the supply of water gave out, and the crew were dying of thirst. After many days they saw a sail against the sky. They signaled it. When the vessel came nearer the people on the suffering ship cried to the captain of the other vessel: "Send us some water. We are dying for lack of water." And the captain of the vessel that was hailed responded: "Dip your buckets where you are. You are in the mouth of the Amazon, and there are scores of miles of fresh water all around about you, and hundreds of feet deep." And then they dropped their buckets over the side of the vessel, and brought up the clear, bright, fresh water, and put out the fire of their thirst. So I hail you today, after a long and perilous voyage, thirsting as you are for pardon, and thirsting for comfort, and thirsting for eternal life; and I ask you what is the use of your going in that death drunk state, while all around you is the deep, clear, wide, sparkling flood of God's sympathetic mercy. O, dip your buckets, and drink, and live forever. "Whoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

Yet my utterance is almost choked at the thought that there are people here who will refuse this divine sympathy; and they will try to fight their own battles, and drink their own vinegar, and carry their own burdens; and their life, instead of being a triumphal march from victory to victory, will be a hobbling on from defeat to defeat, until they make final surrender to retributive disaster. O, I wish I could today gather up in mine arms all the woes of men and women—all their heart-aches—all their disappointments—all their chagrins—and just take them right to the feet of a sympathizing Jesus. He took the vinegar.

Nana Sahib, after he had lost his last battle in India, fell back into the jungles of Ihera—jungles so full of malaria that no mortal could live there. He carried with him, also, a ruby of great luster and of great value. He died in those jungles; his body was never found, and the ruby has never yet been recovered. And I fear that today there are some that will fall back from this subject into the sickening, killing jungles of their sin, carrying a gem of infinite value—a priceless soul—to be lost forever. O, that that ruby might flash in the eternal coronation. But no. There are some, I fear, in this audience who turn away from this offered mercy, and comfort, and Divine sympathy; notwithstanding that Christ, for all who would accept his grace, trudged the long way, and suffered the lacerating thorns, and received in his face the expectations of the filthy mob, and for the guilty, and the discouraged, and the disheartened of the race, took the vinegar. May God Almighty break the infatuation, and lead you out into the strong hope, and the good cheer, and the glorious sunshine of this triumphant Gospel.

### Paper Pulp from Cotton Stalks.

For several weeks there have been on exhibition in the office of the clerk of the superior court samples of pulp made of the hulls and stalks of the cotton plant. The pulp is as white as snow, and can be converted into the finest writing paper. It is regarded as valuable, and is the product of parts of the cotton plant hitherto deemed valueless. The process by which it is made is new. It is a process by which the ligneous substances of the hulls and seed are dissolved. By this process over 50 per cent of the fiber is extracted from the hulls, which have been regarded as fit only for fuel in the mill or for feed and fertilizing purposes, and which were sold for \$4 a ton. These, converted into pulp, will be worth about \$40 a ton. From the stalks usually left to rot in the fields this new process utilizes about 35 per cent of fiber at a very small expense.

It has been settled that there are fertilizing properties in the oil of the cotton seed, and it is asserted that the fiber will not decompose for six years and cannot be used as a fertilizer. This is why the woody matter eliminated from the stalk and hull is much more valuable as a decomposing fertilizer than the entire seed. By the same process the ramie stalk, is met and overcome. By the decorticating process the fiber was crushed and run out by a slow and expensive process. In the new process the lignine is simply dissolved out, and the snowy fibers of the ramie and the tawny threads of the sugar cane are coaxed out as easily as the infantile kitten to its milk.—Atlanta Constitution.

### She Sent Her Baby Home.

Mr. Brent Good, president of the Lyceum Theatre company, told at a dinner party the other evening this story of a lady who was determined to witness the play of "The Wife."

"I was at the Lyceum the other night, standing alongside our treasurer, when two well-dressed ladies entered and handed their tickets to the doorman. One of them had a baby in her arms. I firmly but, I trust, politely told the mother that no babies were allowed in the house. She expostulated, but I asked her how she, if alone, would like to have a noisy baby in an adjacent seat. The argument prevailed, but she said that her money must be returned. It was promptly given her and she went and stood outside with her babe in her arms as if reflecting. Then she returned and requested that a district messenger be called. A rather small boy responded to the summons, and the lady handed him her baby and requested him to take it to her house somewhere in Harlem. The little boy looked growney, but he undertook the task, and I presume performed it safely. When he had gone the determined woman returned, purchased a ticket, and saw the show."—New York Evening Sun.

### Cautions for Talkers.

Seven is the perfect number, and if the following seven rules were faithfully observed, they would do something toward making a perfect man.

1. Before thou openest thy mouth, think.
  2. What thou shalt speak.
  3. Why thou shouldst speak it.
  4. To whom thou art about to speak.
  5. Concerning whom or what, thou art about to speak.
  6. What will result therefrom.
  7. What benefit it can produce.
- To all those in this audience who have been a witness to the celebrated watch on the Rhine!—Queries.

### A Morbidly Sensitive Empress.

The empress of Austria spent a week at Bournemouth recently, exasperating almost to frenzy the antagonism between the two rival hotels, and finally selecting, not the aesthetic and more fashionable Bath, but the quiet Exeter. When, a few days before her arrival, she intimated her intention of taking up her abode in the last named house it was summarily cleared of all its guests, with the exception of one unoffending old maid, who had occupied a top bedroom for seven months, took all her meals in the privacy of her chamber, and was warranted not to show obtrusively on the stairs. The empress, her daughter Valerie, and a large suite filled thirty-six rooms for a week. The empress, spare, tall, erect, has retained much of the far famed beauty which made the Princess Elizabeth, of Thurn and Taxis, the most admirable woman of her time.

Her magnificent hair, as luxuriant as ever, is almost untouched by time, and she seems to disclaim every artifice of toilet and appearance. She dressed plainly, unbecomingly, almost shabbily, rose early, walked out alone with the lady like proprietress of the hotel at half past six o'clock p. m., took long walks on the sands, indifferent alike to wind, sunshine or rain, coming home sometimes drenched to the skin, visiting the pier only when all the inhabitants were safely housed for their meals, giving no trouble, and apparently satisfied with everything. She had been so cruelly mobbed at Cromer, on the east coast, that she had become morbidly sensitive about being stared at, and to avoid observation, resorted imprudently to a device more likely to attract attention than to shun it. She sallied forth in the coldly inclement weather with a large fan, which she held up before her face whenever she suspected the passers-by of scanning her features.—The Argonaut.

### A Change in the Buttons.

There is nothing more noticeable to me than the wonderful change in the buttons that women wear that has taken place in two years. Perhaps I notice it more on account of being in the business, but it is so radical that any one would perceive it if he had his attention called to it. Formerly the buttons were fancy and large; now they are small, plain and cheap. When merchants can sell manufactured buttons for three cents a dozen it reduces the profits of the manufacturer. Style has decided that buttons shall be small and plain. In consequence, it is very seldom that a woman pays more than twenty cents a dozen for the buttons she uses on her dress, and the majority use five cent and ten cent buttons.

But this style will not last long; it will get around to the old price where it was profitable to manufacture buttons. Two years ago the style was to wear novelties, and the buttons used on dresses were so cost less than fifty cents a dozen. The size of the buttons began to increase, and it was not uncommon to see buttons two inches square on cloaks. Many ladies paid as high as \$2 apiece for buttons. They were made in fancy shapes, and there are few ladies who have not pretty collections in their scrap bags. They will be useful some day, for the fashion in buttons is always changing. Our trade fluctuates accordingly. With improved machinery it is now easy to make a cheap, plain button. Bone is the principal material for these buttons, and vegetable ivory is also used, as well as composition.—Globe-Democrat.

### Wild Animals in Africa.

Of the wild animals, singularly enough only the leopards are dreaded, for they often attack man, which the lions never do, although they lurk in the bush by twos and threes. The negroes told Emin that they were under the control of a chief named Loter, a very simple, good natured man, who always kept two tame lions in his house (a fact, and as long as he receives occasional presents of corn and goats, prevents the wild lions from doing any mischief.

It is curious to note that the lions here are good tempered (perhaps because they find abundance of food), and they are also much admired, as was shown by the following incident: "One day," he says, "we came upon a lion caught in a pitfall, whereupon Chief Loter was fetched, and he pushed into the pit branches of trees to enable the lion to get out; this it did, and after giving us a roar of acknowledgment, walked off unharmed."

### Prizes of the Ocean.

Sperm whales, the monsters of deep water, are the richest prizes of the ocean, yielding spermaceti from their brain cases, ivory from their lower jaws, rich, yellow oil from their sides, and (when diseased) the almost priceless ambergris from their entrails. Next in value comes the right whale, the inhabitant of the Arctic, in whose mouth whalebone is substituted for ivory. The upper jaw is furnished with this substance, a great pile of which lies high on the bench at Herring Cove. It is, perhaps, ten inches across where it joins the jaw, and reminds one more of a great comb with tangled hair, attached than anything else. The "teeth" are closely set, and are three feet and more long, tapering to a point and terminating in rope like filaments.

While the sperm whale feeds on squid at the bottom of the ocean, the right whale speeds along with open mouth, engulfing huge quantities of water and greater or less quantities of the animalcules and small fish on which it subsists. When his cavernous mouth is full he closes it, blows out the water through his spout holes, and with the aid of his tongue swallows the little creatures which have become imbedded in the curious attachment of his upper jaw.—Cor. Baltimore American.

### A Horrible Death Sentence.

We mentioned the terrible sanctions by which the Chinese secret societies enforce their laws, which, of themselves, make them dangerous subjects, and The Liverpool Post furnishes a remarkable illustration. According to a report from the American minister at Peking, a man belonging to the American association of gold beaters at Tsochow recently took more apprentices than one. This is forbidden, so the local trades union took up the matter and condemned the man to be bitten to death, and the sentence was literally carried out. One hundred and twenty-three men had a bite at him before he expired. It would not strike the childlike and blood-chilled that there was anything specially horrible in such a form of murder.—London Spectator.

### The Celebrated Watch.

A lady who had been abroad was describing some of the sights of her trip to a party of friends. "But what pleased me as much as anything," she said, "was the wonderful clock at Strasburg."—"Oh, how I should love to see it!" exclaimed a pretty young woman in pink. "I am so interested in such things. And did you see the celebrated watch on the Rhine?"—Queries.

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